



# Biodiversity in County Roscommon

## Look around you and see the wonderful selection of wildlife and habitats in our beautiful county...



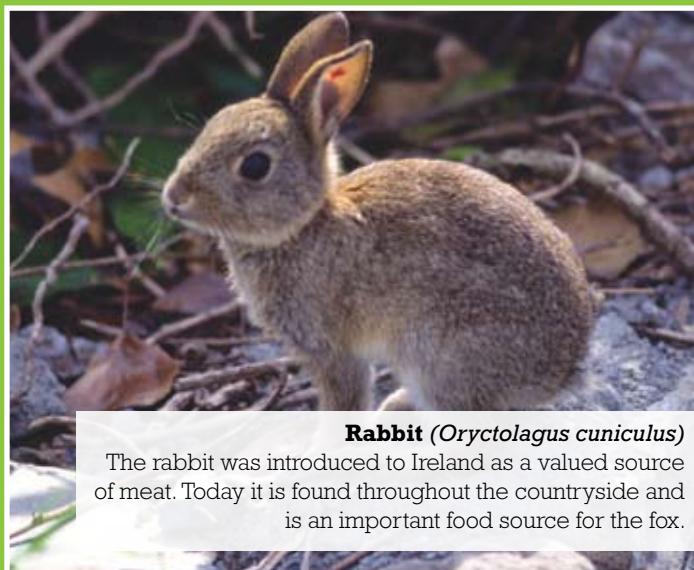
**Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)**

The red fox is a wild relative of the dog. It hunts mainly at night and feeds mostly on rabbits, rats and mice. A common sight in the countryside and sometimes in towns.



**Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)**

The hedgehog is distinctive with its spines and comes out at night to feed on snails, slugs and worms. It hibernates between October and early April.



**Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)**

The rabbit was introduced to Ireland as a valued source of meat. Today it is found throughout the countryside and is an important food source for the fox.



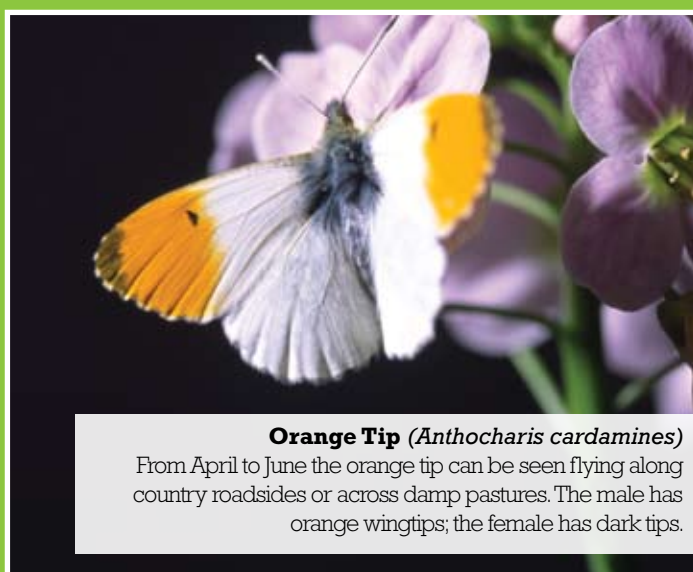
**Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*)**

The small tortoiseshell is one of the most colourful butterflies in Ireland. It is one of the first butterflies to be seen in early summer.



**Peacock (*Inachis io*)**

This butterfly gets its name because of the similarity of the spots on its wings to a peacock's tail. With a wingspan of around 70mm, this is one of our largest butterfly species.



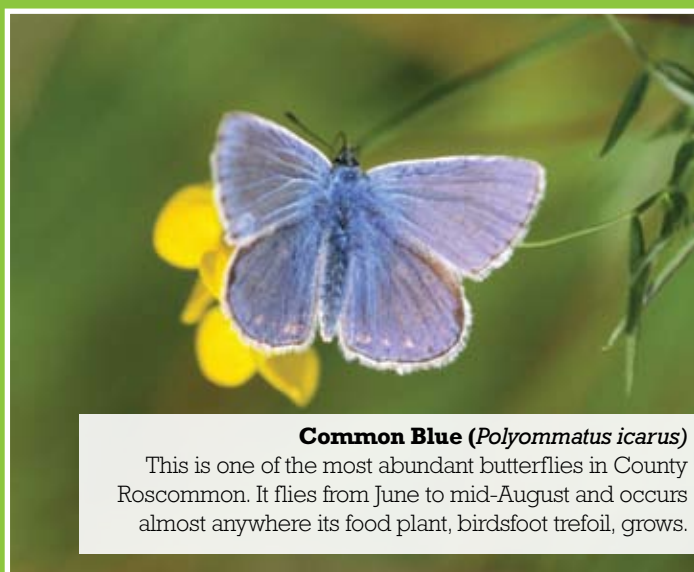
**Orange Tip (*Anthocharis cardamines*)**

From April to June the orange tip can be seen flying along country roadsides or across damp pastures. The male has orange wingtips; the female has dark tips.



**Marsh Fritillary (*Eurodryas aurinia*)**

The marsh fritillary frequents damp meadows where its food plant, devil's-bit scabious, grows. It flies in May and June and can be seen in many places in County Roscommon.



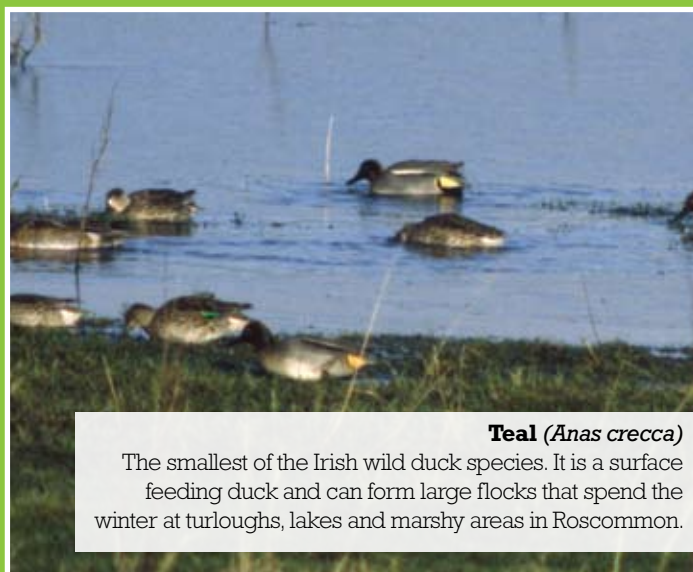
**Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*)**

This is one of the most abundant butterflies in County Roscommon. It flies from June to mid-August and occurs almost anywhere its food plant, birdsfoot trefoil, grows.



**Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*)**

The jackdaw is the smallest of the crow species. It is equally at home in the town and the countryside. In winter it can form large flocks that roost on tall trees.



**Teal (*Anas crecca*)**

The smallest of the Irish wild duck species. It is a surface feeding duck and can form large flocks that spend the winter at turloughs, lakes and marshy areas in Roscommon.



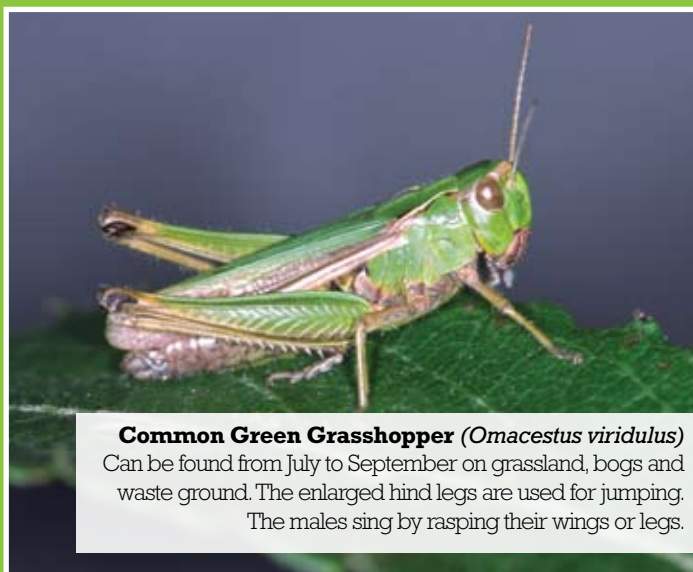
**Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*)**

A regular winter visitor to lakes and turloughs in Roscommon. Its yellow bill distinguishes it from the local mute swan and it is sometimes referred to as the wild swan.



**The 7-spot Ladybird (*Coccinella septempunctata*)**

This brightly coloured ladybird is the most familiar of beetles and is probably the only one most people will handle. Helpful to gardeners as they have an appetite for aphids.



**Common Green Grasshopper (*Omacestus viridulus*)**

Can be found from July to September on grassland, bogs and waste ground. The enlarged hind legs are used for jumping. The males sing by rasping their wings or legs.



**The Four-Spotted Chaser Dragonfly (*Libellula quadrimaculata*)**

Among the fastest flying insects in the world. This species inhabits boggy pools and flies from mid-May to mid-August.



**Large Red Damselfly (*Pyrrhosoma nymphula*)**

It is the only red damselfly in Ireland and can be seen from mid-May to mid-August as it flies over drains, streams and bogs. It is very common.



**Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*)**

The common frog varies greatly in colour. Its back may be grey, yellow, brown, orange or red. The frog is capable of changing its colour slowly to match its surroundings.



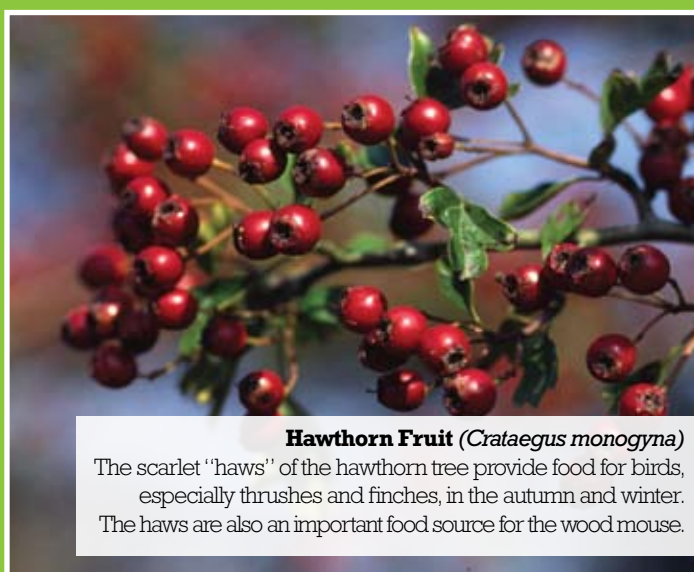
**Tadpole of Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*)**

Frogs hibernate in winter and emerge in early spring to lay eggs, known as frogspawn, which hatch into tadpoles.



**Brown Trout (*Salmo trutta*)**

Young trout have dark blotches along their sides and are known as parr. Trout require pristine rivers and lakes to survive and are a good indicator of clean water.



**Hawthorn Fruit (*Crataegus monogyna*)**

The scarlet "haws" of the hawthorn tree provide food for birds, especially thrushes and finches, in the autumn and winter. The haws are also an important food source for the wood mouse.



**Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla alba yarrellii*)**

This slim, elegant, long-tailed bird does not 'wag' so much as 'bob' its tail. They usually live near water and are present throughout the year.



**Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*)**

Honeysuckle or woodbine is one of Ireland's few woody climbing plants. Its pink-yellow flowers appear from June to August and have a pleasant, strong fragrance.



**Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*)**

A member of the pea family, it is also known as furze and whin. The countryside is a glorious yellow with scented flowers of the gorse from March to May.



**Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*)**

The primrose flowers in early spring and is one of the first flowering plants of the year. It grows in hedgerows, woods and old grasslands throughout the county.



**Fly Agaric Fungus (*Amanita muscaria*)**

This bright-red fungus grows in wooded areas, particularly pine and birch woods. It appears between August and November. It is poisonous.